

HISTORICAL SOURCES

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He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Wachokue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121).

Sogaaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14).

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8-10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type.

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent.

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende.

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321-331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

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Young unmarried girls of the Luvando tribe wear a large number 301
of leg-bands which extend from the ankles to the knees as a sign that 724
puberty has not been reached. These leg-bands are somewhat roughly [821]
twisted from fibrous roots and twigs from which the cortex has been
removed. Collars of tough, elastic, cane-like substance are worn by
Luvando women, and so numerous are these that the neck is entirely
covered. These cane neck-bands are ornamented with burned, [531]
incised, geometrical patterns, and, in keeping with other ornaments,
are thickly smeared with grease and red powder from *tukula* wood
(Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

Women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama wear heavy coils of 171
brass or copper wire on their forearms. In southern Angola women 301
wear bracelets of twisted wire which are identical with those worn 439
by Zulu women. Bracelets of beaten trade brass, ornamented with [531]
incised geometrical designs, are worn by women of the Ovimbundu,
Vakuanyama, Luvando, and Vakipungo tribes. Ovimbundu women
now depend largely on trade goods for personal ornament.

Ovimbundu men and women are dressed in trade cloth. Unmar- 291
ried girls wear one piece of cloth which hangs from the armpits to the 171
knees. A married woman drapes herself with two pieces of cloth,
a skirt hanging from her girdle, and an upper piece so folded as to
hold her baby tightly to her back. Men wear a single piece of cloth
as a skirt; the upper part of the body is bare (Plates XLIX-LI).
From the region of Kipungo to the southern border, clothing is of
leather. The Vachokue wear trade cloth or bark cloth.

Hairdressing is of many styles. Ovimbundu women braid their hair 302
neatly in strands across their foreheads, and small blue and white 171
trade beads are used to decorate the braids. The hairdressing of the
Ovimbundu women is different from that in any other part of Angola.
At an early age the hair is trained into two long loops at the back
of the head. Then these are covered with black cloth which is bound
tightly. The two loops are afterwards studded with brass-headed
tacks obtained from a store (Plate XL, Fig. 3).

Luvando women in the region of Kipungo dress the hair to form
a large triangular projection from the back of the head. Girls of the
Vaheneca tribe near Huila mass the hair with clay to form large
"cock's combs." Women of Gambos pass each small plait of hair
through hollow reeds. Humbe women do not redden or grease their
hair which is massed into three high ridges on the top, while at the
sides there are hornlike projections. Vakuanyama women dress their
hair with grease and *tukula* powder. A principal wife builds up her

276 The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. [531] The Ovimbundu of Bihe add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the snuff without adulteration. [549] Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl [834] for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe from her hand I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ovimbundu woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella [171] (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231- The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanyi*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

322 The tools used by the wood-carver are the saw, ax, adze, and knife.

532 The products of this craft may be conveniently divided into the following groups:

(1) Figurines of human form (Plate XXI, Figs. 1-6).

(2) Animal forms, chiefly snakes, tortoises, birds, and lizards. The dog is sometimes represented (Plates XIX, Figs. 1-5; XLI, Fig. 1).

[534] (3) Parts of musical instruments, such as drums and the base-boards of *assasa*. The latter often have the metal keys mounted on boards decorated with elaborately incised patterns (Plates XLI, Fig. 2; XXII, Fig. 5).

[415] (4) Domestic implements and utensils, chief of which are heavy wooden beaters for flattening mud floors of houses, grain pounders, stools, cups, platters, bowls, and a heavy pestle and mortar (Plates XIII, Fig. 3; XVIII, Figs. 1, 2).

• [211] (5) Carved sticks and clubs; these often show elaborate incised decorations of geometrical patterns. Frequently the head of the stick is carved to represent a human head or a full-length figure. [213] The ornamented stick or club is carried as part of the personal dress and artistic equipment. The throwing club is usually a straight stick with an undecorated knob at the end (Plate XX, Figs. 1-10).

(6) Carved wooden posts representing the human form. These are set up at the wayside. One has been obtained from a grave near Bailundu.

(7) Tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

177 Figurines of human form require special consideration, because
532 they have claims other than that of aesthetic expression. The figures representing Europeans, or natives using some article of foreign introduction, illustrate the grafting of foreign ideas on older methods of work.

113 The art of the African Negro has of late years been accorded a place of honor in critical circles of Europe and America (P. Guillaume and T. Munro, *Primitive Negro Sculpture*, New York, 1926). Usually, however, the formal technique of lines, curves, and the general aesthetic effect have been discussed to the exclusion of the ethnological background which determines style and function.

531 By far the best example of carved human figures collected in Angola was the one from Cangamba (Plate XXI, Fig. 4). This female figure, 60 cm high, is carved from hard, dark, red wood in such a way as to achieve a graceful result by the employment of a few

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The water-pipe of the Ovimbundu consists of the horn of a cow 276
into the side of which a short hollow pipe stem is introduced; at the
top of the stem is a clay bowl for the reception of tobacco, or a
mixture of tobacco and hemp. The wide end of the horn is plugged
with clay, while a hole is made at the tip in order to provide a mouth-
piece. A gourd water-pipe, similar to that used by the Vachokue, is
also found among the Ovimbundu.

Cylindrical snuff boxes are ornamented with incised, burned, 276
geometrical patterns. The lid is usually attached to the box by a 531
leather thong. One large snuff box is ornamented with three well-
carved female figures. The smoker's equipment is sometimes carried
in a leather pouch fastened on a waist belt, or the container may be
a hollow cylinder of ivory with a leather cap at each end.

To this information respecting the smoking and snuff-taking outfit 276
of the Ovimbundu, some observations on the pipes and snuff boxes 171
of other tribes should be added. When making a journey from
Cangamba to Saurimo I seldom met an Ocivokue man who was not
carrying a gourd water-pipe for the smoking of tobacco and hemp.
Such pipes are usually ornamented with brass nails and are finely
bound with thin brass wire (Plate XV, Fig. 3). One long pipe from
Ngalangi has a pair of metal tongs attached for taking charcoal from
the fire in order to ignite the tobacco (Plate XV, Fig. 1). A pipe
with two bowls, closely resembling some Zulu patterns, was smoked
by an Ocimbundu woman at Ngalangi. The Vachokue make snuff
boxes from a yellow wood, which they ornament by burning portions
of the surface in such a way that the yellow color is here and there
visible.

Both men and women of the Vakipungo and Vakwanyama tribes
carry snuff boxes of conical shape on their leather waist belts. At
the top and bottom such snuff boxes are neatly bound with brass
or copper wire.

DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS

At an early age girls become accustomed to the use of the V-shaped 412
pounder which is made from hard heavy wood (Plate XXXVI,
Fig. 2). The small end of the shaft is a convenient thickness for
grasping in such a way that the knuckles are on the under side of
the shaft. This is the very reverse of what appears to be the natural
grip. Women use the pounder with an easy, circular swing so that
the flat round surface comes into contact with the grain on the rock.
Endurance in this work is remarkable, and there is no doubt that

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Not only the carpenter, but almost every Ovimbundu man possesses an implement which may be readily adapted as ax or adze (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). The wooden shaft, from 50 to 70 cm in length, terminates in a narrow grip at one end, while the other end expands into a large oval knob into which a circular hole is bored. The strong iron blade, one of the main products of the local forge, can be removed. If the round tang of the blade is inserted so that the cutting edge is in the same plane as the shaft, the implement is an ax. On the contrary, insertion so that the cutting edge is at right angles to the shaft converts the implement into an adze. When placed over the shoulder this implement is used for carrying utensils in a fiber bag (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 1).

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Gourds are of three main kinds, which may be found growing on the ground, or resting on the roofs of houses at the ends of the climbing stems that bear them. *Ombenge* is a gourd which is narrow in the middle. It is often converted into a dipper for ladling liquids. The narrow neck is the handle, while a round hole is cut in the larger part so that the dipper can be filled with liquid. *Onganja* is round, or perhaps oval in form. There is a size used as a measure of capacity. *Onganja* can be used as a ladle by fixing it at the end of a stick. *Oluksombo* has a round body and a narrow hook-shaped neck; like the gourd *ombenge*, it is used as a ladle.

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Gourds are elaborately decorated with incised and burned designs (Plate XII, Figs. 1-6). Usually these patterns are geometrical, but human figures and animals are sometimes included. Decorated gourds from Bailundu, used for containing beer at a wedding, are among the best examples of their kind (Plate XII, Fig. 6). The owner of a decorated gourd takes great pains to repair a crack with rattan, which is threaded through holes bored in the edges of the fracture. A large gourd is sometimes carried in a native-made net of vegetable fiber.

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POTTERY

A large and varied collection of pottery has been acquired from the Ovimbundu, the Vachokue, and the Vasele. The shapes and styles are best indicated by the illustrations in Plate XIV, Figs. 1-5.

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Among the Ovimbundu, only women make pots, which are inferior in workmanship to those of the Vachokue and the Vasele. At Elende, among the Ovimbundu, I was surprised to find a man making pottery. Further inquiry showed that he had learned his craft when young in the Vachokue country of eastern Angola. This man, whose work was not copied at all by Ovimbundu women, was regarded as a specialist whose products were in great demand.

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323 specialist whose products were in great demand. Instead of making
171 crude patterns with a piece of gourd, as do the Ovimbundu women,
(531) he presses a brass bracelet round the rims of the pots. The bracelet
is deeply indented with geometrical patterns which appear on the
clay (Plate XIV, Fig. 5). This man selects a very fine clay for his
work, his products are symmetrical, and a polish is given with a
smooth pebble after baking. Like all other potters of Angola, this
artisan has no knowledge of the potter's wheel.

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The vessels made by Vasele women, among whom the trade is
confined to female specialists, are unlike the products from any other
part of Angola. The chevron design is characteristic, so also is the
ornamenting of the pot by laying on strips of clay below the rim.
This is appliqué work which may consist of only a few bands of clay,
or the strips may pass repeatedly round the pot until one-half or
two-thirds of the surface has been covered (Plate XIV, Fig. 2).

323 At Elende two Ovimbundu women were observed during the pot-
making processes (Plates XXXIII, XXXIV). Woman A built up the
pot in a basket lined with wet leaves. Woman B pounded the clay
on a stone with the heavy wooden pounder used for pounding corn
on the rocks. Between the two women was a gourd of water in which
A moistened her fingers. Operator B poured water on the clay which
she was pounding. A made a cup of clay five inches in diameter and
four inches deep which served as a base on which the pot was built
up by the coiling process. This cup was placed in the basket contain-
ing moist leaves.

The rim of the cup was built in height and breadth by the addition
of rolls of clay supplied by woman B. As the rolls of clay were laid on
the edges of the pot, the inside was smoothed with a piece of gourd.
Meanwhile the outside of the pot was supported with one hand.
Shaping of the pot proceeded by applying smaller and smaller rolls
of clay as the neck of the pot was approached. Gentle smoothing
pressure forced out the greatest breadth of the pot just below the
base of the neck. A pause was made to allow a partial drying before
the neck was built up. Ornamentation consisted of making deep
incisions with a piece of gourd while the pot was still wet. During
these processes there was constant wetting of the hands.

The pots were sun dried, then fired several at a time by placing
them in a kiln of dry grass. Polish was given to a pot while it was
still hot by covering the surface with liquid made from a tuberous
root, during which process the pot was quickly turned on a stick.

285 The name *esias* is given to the raw material as well as to the mat. The worker begins by laying out the reeds on the ground, side by side; then the slender tool *utomo* is passed through the reeds near their ends. This position is made permanent by sewing, and the process is repeated at intervals along the length of the reeds (Plate XLII, Figs. 1, 2).

Erinda is a large mat, about 120 cm long and 20 cm wide, while each strip of coarse elephant grass is about 3 cm wide. Ability to make the rush mat (*esias*) is fairly common, but skill in making *erinda* is less usual. The mat *erinda* has several uses; it may be stretched on the floor or bed as a sleeping mat, or possibly it is rolled so that the ends can be fastened together; so treated it forms a cylinder which may be filled with grain when stood upright on the ground. A number of these mats is sometimes used to form a temporary storage place or shelter. The technique is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and under two warps.

Ocala is a coarse mat made from long stalks which are called "elephant grass" by the Boers; the agricultural term is "Napier's fodder." The long rods are white and glazed, so forming an artistic contrast to the crossbinding, which is of black bark. The technique is known as check, a term used to describe a structure in which warp and weft pass over and under each other singly.

The large mat (*ocikanga*) which is of soft texture shows neatly woven, diamond-shaped patterns of dark brown grass. The technique of this mat is of the twilled variety in which each weft passes over and then under two warps.

283 String bags, which are used for suspending gourds or hanging them over the shoulder, are made by men only. The root *ombundi*, mentioned in connection with brewing beer, is used for making string bags. Two fibers that have been teased out from the root are rolled tightly together by rubbing them between the palm and the thigh.

[462] Strong rope is sometimes made by plaiting coarse grass; this occupation is in the hands of males.

386 In basket-making the preparation of dyes is of great importance because colored strands of grass are inwoven to make named geometrical patterns (Plates IX; X). The Umbundu expression for dyeing is *okw lia olocece*.

Re coloring is produced by taking leaves of a plant named *erera* and cooking them in water along with the bark of the tree *utondo*.

[515] *Utondo* is the "tooth brush" tree because small pieces of its wood are chewed and used for cleaning the teeth. After the grass has

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simmered in this infusion of *esesa* leaves and *akondo* bark, it is buried ³⁸⁶ in a heap of ashes and earth. These processes produce the red coloring.

Yellow dye is made from the roots of a wild rhubarb (*oclesapula*) which has sagittate leaves. The roots are pounded and mixed with cold water, after which the grass is placed in the mixture. A pot containing the mixture is put on the fire and the contents are boiled for half an hour; at the end of this time the grass is an amber-yellow in color.

In order to dye grass black the leaves of *esesa*, the plant used for making red dye, are mixed with an iron solution obtained from the mud of stagnant pools. If the grass which has been cooked in this mixture is not sufficiently dark it is reboiled in the *esesa*-iron mixture to which the powdered leaves of *ungalo* are added. Brown coloring is made by mixing the red dye with the yellow.

Baskets made by the coiling process are the most common type ²⁸⁵ manufactured by Ovimbundu women (Plate XV, Fig. 6). The large basket *olumbe* is a woman's field basket in which she carries corn, sweet potatoes, and manioc, along with her hoe and pounder (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 2). Each coil consists of a large number of strands of fine grass which are tightly bound. The coils of the better baskets are wrapped with the grass called *ooka*; this wrapping fastens each coil to the preceding coil. Coarser baskets have the coils wrapped with strips from the leaf of the screw pine (*emafafalo*). There is a sewing process in which the coils are bound to one another with the bark *olondori*, which is kept damp during the process. I have seen a needle, threaded with bast, used for sewing coils together; the needle was rethreaded every time it passed through a coil. Success in basket-making depends largely on the ability of the worker to keep the coils of uniform thickness. There is constant inspection and plucking out of a strand of grass here and there (Plate XXXIX, Fig. 2).

In making basket trays (*ongalo*), the same coiling process is followed, but the work is kept flat. These trays are used for winnowing corn. Wicker-work is used for making conical traps for small game such as hares and rats. Conical fish traps are made of wicker-work. Names of patterns, which are of a simple geometrical kind, ^[531] are well known to basket-makers. Sometimes a pattern is woven round the basket at a certain height to indicate a generally accepted standard for measurement of capacity.

361 At the present time one type of village is surrounded by stout stakes ten or more feet high set in a roughly circular plan. The arrangement of alleyways within the village is complicated without following any symmetrical plan. A visitor sees only a labyrinth of passages between high poles, with here and there a rectangular wooden gate at intervals along the passages. The door itself is made from 417 four stout heavy planks which are roughly hewn and as a rule undecorated, but occasionally I have seen the panels of a door carved with 335 designs representing the breasts of a woman; or there may have been [531] simple geometrical patterns. The top ends of the door panels are massive spheres of wood bored through with holes. Through the holes in the tops of these panels a pintle is passed in such a way that the door is suspended from above. During the daytime the lower ends of the panels are raised to the level of the lintel. They are there supported on a Y-shaped upright which is erected in front of the doorway. At night the planks are removed from this support and allowed to hang downward in the doorway. There is a sliding cross-piece to push over the lower ends. The same arrangement is sometimes used to make a door for a hut. This old type of village doorway, common twenty years ago, is becoming increasingly rare.

342 The house of a king or a chief is larger than that of a commoner. 644 The enclosure which contains a king's house and the other buildings 621 is named *elombe*, while *epondesulo* is the word used to describe the entrance to this compound. The *elombe* is built by men and women who receive no payment. There is a ceremony when the compound is opened. The house of the chief, Kandimba Sanjahulu, near Bailundu, is rectangular, with mud walls raised on a platform of earth and stones. Whitewash has been applied to the outside of the walls and some ornament is given in the form of painted blue crosses. Complete study of structural types and the planning of internal divisions has been made by F. and W. Jaspert, of the Städtisches Völkermuseum, Frankfurt.

644 At a village near Cuma the house of the chief differed from the dwellings of commoners in being somewhat larger. The house had been abandoned, not because the chief died there, but because the chieftainship had been transferred to an adjacent village. The tomb, which will be described in connection with funeral rites, was a few yards from the house. This mausoleum was surrounded by a high wooden palisade, to a stake of which were attached the horns of an ox killed at the funeral feast, while the jawbone lay in the enclosure

338 feet. A trench about eighteen inches deep is dug for the poles (akoso), which form the framework. The wattle work is tied to the uprights with strong strips of red bark before the plastering is begun.

341 The old type of Umbundu house was round, but most of the houses
171 now show a transition to square or rectangular forms (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2).

• [537] Exterior wall-painting is found only in the northern districts of Angola (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 2). Between Saurimo and Malange in the north, rectangular, painted houses are frequently seen. Wall-painting is a cultural trait from the Congo region where that form of decoration is common.

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621 The method of forming a village site and the right of the chief to allot land have been described. The house of the chief is the first to be erected. There is drinking of beer to celebrate the completion of the village, and the pots of beer have to be stirred with the claws of chickens; these have been killed to provide blood for sprinkling the walls of the new houses. Village chiefs go through the process of stirring and drinking. The medicine-man drinks first, then he offers the cup to the chief.

344 The communal house is built by the united efforts of all men of
476 the village. Ngonga says, "The king never helps with any of the
[485] building, but he talks very much." The guest house is also built
644 by communal labor. The king of the ombals of Ngalandi told me that a king always uses the house of his predecessor, which must not be pulled down. No repairs are permitted and the house is used until it is absolutely untenable.

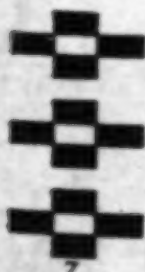
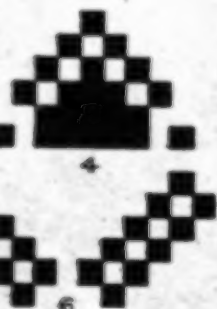
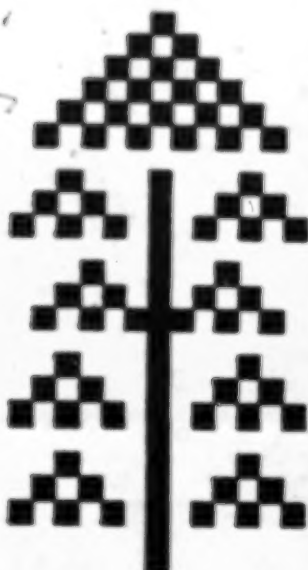
354 The interior of a commoner's house has three hearth stones in the
342 middle of the floor, which is of hard mud beaten down with a heavy wooden implement called *ocikandulo*. The ceremonial placing of the stones has been described in discussing marriage. There is no chimney, consequently the walls and roof are blackened with smoke. The junction of roof and walls provides pockets for the reception of small articles. On the floor near the walls may be several large beer pots. The dark smoky interior is almost intolerable. The sleeping
352 room is sometimes separated from the living room by matting. The bed is made from a cross-work of sticks supported on four Y-shaped posts, one at each corner. On the bed are coarse sleeping mats and possibly a modern blanket.

356 The miscellaneous contents of the hut are gourds, dippers, cooking
252 pots of several sizes, pounders, and baskets. In many of the huts I found cooking going on in the general room, but frequently a sepa-

Field Museum of Natural History

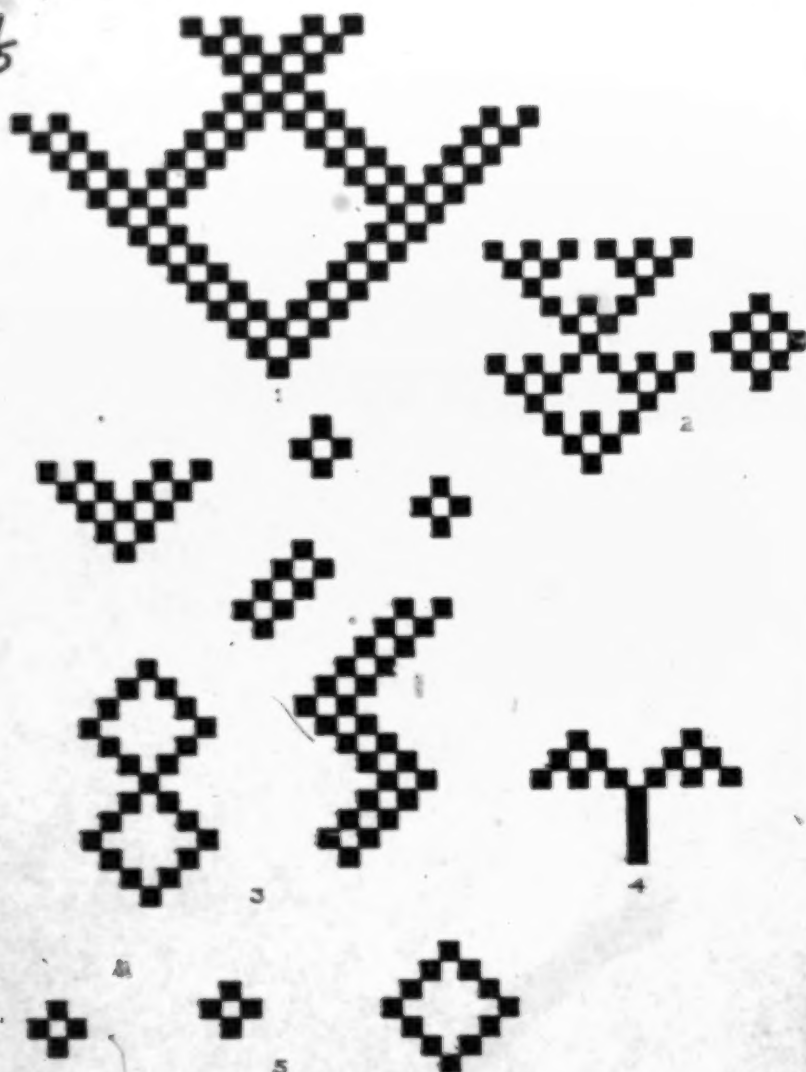
Anthropology, Vol. XXV, Plate XX

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BASKET-WORK PATTERNS

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BASKET-WORK PATTERNS

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SCENES IN CENTRAL ANGOLA

Fig. 1. House where king communes with ancestral spirits, Njingundi

Fig. 2. House with painted walls, near Bakundu

Fig. 3. Group showing mixture of tribes at Njingundi

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